

REMARKS

Amendments to the claims have been made to respond to the issues and concerns raised in the Office Action, to clarify aspects in the specification and claims, and to refine claim language. The amendments are believed to be consistent with the disclosure originally filed. The amendments also have been particularly presented to avoid, where applicable, any admission or estoppel, generally, negatively affecting the scope of protection provided by the disclosure and claims of the present application, and also in a manner that avoids prosecution history estoppel, limitation of the scope of equivalences, or the like. Any amendment should not be construed as an admission regarding the propriety of any objection or rejection raised in any Office Action, and the Applicant reserves the right to pursue the full scope of the unamended claims in any subsequent patent application as may be appropriate.

In this response, claims 1-185 have been cancelled. Claims 186-220 have been newly added and remain in the application. Each amendment is believed to have been made in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.121. However, should any unintended informality exist, it is requested that the undersigned be contacted by telephone so that it may be resolved as expediently as possible. It is believed the amendments fully respond to the issues raised in the Office Action. Further detail with respect to specific points raised in the Office Action is offered below.

As a preliminary matter, the Applicant notes that many of the issues and concerns related to the present case present complex and intertwining considerations. Accordingly, in the event questions remain, the Applicant requests the opportunity to pursue an interview to resolve any issues or concerns.

The Office states that the Information Disclosure Statement filed on October 20, 2005 does not include a concise statement of relevance for certain non-English language references, is missing copies of certain cited references, and that copies of certain cited references are not readable. Please be advised the Applicant regrets this inconvenience

and intends to timely submit an Information Disclosure Statement for consideration with this response that includes the necessary information. While the Information Disclosure Statement may increase the burden associated with examining this application, it is believed to be the only way in which Applicant may comply with its duties under 37 C.F.R. § 1.56.

The Applicant has cancelled all pending claims and introduced newly added claims 186-220. The newly added claims are believed to be supported by the originally filed disclosure. While the Applicant is mindful of the examination burden posed by the newly added claims, please be aware the Applicant considers such newly added claims to be necessary at the present time for commercial and strategic reasons. Moreover, while the Applicant expressly preserves the option to pursue the cancelled claims at a later date without prejudice, the Applicant believes the current amendments make all points raised in the Office Action moot at the present time. Accordingly, the Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections and objections to the application. Allowance of claims 186-220 is requested at the Office's earliest convenience.

Dated this 1st day of November, 2006.

Respectfully submitted,
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